

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 156050

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. LEBANON: FORMATION OF NEW CABINET OFFERS NEW HOPE

EMBASSY BEIRUT BELIEVES THAT THE NEW KARAME CABINET REPRESENTS A MUCH BETTER SOLUTION TO THE POLITICAL ASPECT OF THE LEBANESE CRISIS THAN OTHER CONCEIVABLE COMBINATIONS. IT INCLUDES SEVERAL CAPABLE AND INFLUENTIAL PERSONALITIES WHO, IF THEY TAKE HOLD RAPIDLY AND DECISIVELY, HAVE A REASONABLE CHANCE OF ARRESTING A DETERIORATING SITUATION AND EVENTUALLY BUYING TIME TO TACKLE BASIC UNDERLYING PROBLEMS.

DESPITE THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FORMATION OF THE CABINET THE NIGHT OF JUNE 30, BEIRUT AND OTHER PARTS OF LEBANON SUFFERED THROUGH PROBABLY THE WORST NIGHT OF TERROR AND DESTRUCTION TO DATE.

--CASUALTIES SINCE THE AFTERNOON OF JUNE 30 MAY RUN AS HIGH AS 100 DEAD AND SEVERAL HUNDRED WOUNDED.

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--NORMAL ACTIVITY AND ALL ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY ARE AT A STANDSTILL, AND MANY LEBANESE ARE LEAVING BEIRUT FOR THE MOUNTAINS AND VILLAGES IN THE SOUTH.

--THE EMBASSY IS ADVISING US CITIZENS TO REMAIN IN THEIR HOMES AND TO RESTRICT THEIR MOVEMENTS TO THE ABSOLUTE MINIMUM. (CONFIDENTIAL) BEIRUT 8317 AND 8335, 7/1.

2. ARGENTINA: LABOR'S CONFRONTATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT

FOLLOWING A TWO AND ONE HALF HOUR MEETING WITH PRESIDENT PERON, THE LEADERS OF ARGENTINA'S LABOR UNIONS ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE ANNOUNCING THAT DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT WOULD BE RESUMED JULY 2. MRS. PERON REPORTEDLY TOLD THE LABOR LEADERS TO RETURN WITH A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION. THE RANK AND FILE'S REACTION TO THE DELAY IS STILL UNCLEAR ALTHOUGH THEY ARE EXPECTED TO MAINTAIN PRESSURE ON THEIR LEADERS. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) BUENOS AIRES 4419, 7/1.

3. LAOS: OCCUPATION CONTINUES, USG PROPERTY RANSACKED

EMBASSY VIENTIANE REPORTS THAT CHARGE CHAPMAN WAS UNABLE TO SEE PHOUMI JULY 1 TO PROTEST THE OCCUPATION OF EMBASSY BUILDINGS BECAUSE THE FOREIGN MINISTER WAS "TOO TIRED FROM HIS TRIP".

MEANWHILE, THE OCCUPATION OF USG COMPOUNDS CONTINUES, WITH SOME HOUSES REPORTEDLY BEING RAIDED AND RANSACKED, IN ADDITION, USAID PROTEST LEADERS AND PATHET LAO SOLDIERS HAVE THREATENED USIS AND GSO LOCAL EMPLOYEES AND URGED THEM TO QUIT.

EMBASSY COMMENT: THE CURRENT SITUATION IS UNACCEPTABLE. THE USG HAS BEEN PATIENT AND FOREBEARING FOR TWO MONTHS. UNLESS WE REACT NOW WITH ANGER TO THIS APPARENTLY MOTIVELESS ATTACK ON THE EMBASSY, WE DO NOT SEE WHERE ELSE WE CAN DRAW THE LINE. (CONFIDENTIAL) VIENTIANE 4653, 7/1.

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4. PRC ERECTING A NEW POLICY IN NIAMEY

A NIGERIAN SOURCE HAS TOLD EMBASSY NIAMEY THAT THE CHINESE EMBASSY STAFF NOW INCLUDES A TEAM OF DOCTORS PRACTICING BOTH CONVENTIONAL MEDICINE AND ACUPUNCTURE. WORD HAS NOW GOTTEN AROUND NIAMEY THAT THE ACUPUNCTURE SPECIALIST CAN RESTORE FADING VITALITY AND A NUMBER OF GON MINISTERS WHO HAVE NEED OF HIS SERVICES ARE BEATING A PATH TO HIS DOOR SEVERAL TIMES

A WEEK.

EMBASSY COMMENT: WE HAVE CHECKED WITH THE FRENCH EMBASSY ON
THE THEORY THAT THE FRENCH HAVE A CERTAIN REPUTATION AND
EXPERIENCE IN MATTERS OF SEX, BUT NEITHER THEY, NOR OUR
SOVIET COLLEAGUES, NOR WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO COME UP WITH
MEASURES TO COUNTER THIS INGENIOUS CHINESE TECHNIQUE OF
WINNING FRIENDS AND INFLUENCING PEOPLE. (CONFIDENTIAL)
NIAMEY 2558, 7/1. INGERSOLL

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